

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

/060 W

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R 090645Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4383

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGRADE 5314

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS: PGOV PINT PBOR PFOR BU YO

SUBJ: THE MACEDONIAN QUESTION

1. IN RECENT MONTHS WE HAVE NOTED MAJOR CAMPAIGN BY YUGOSLAVS TO SETTLE CHRONIC PROBLEMS WITH THEIR NEIGHBORS-- PERHAPS TO HAVE CLEAN SLATE AS THEY MOVE TOWARD POST-TITO ERA. AGREEMENT ON TRIESTE REMOVES CENTRAL CONTINUING IRRITANT IN ITALIAN-YUGOSLAV RELATIONS. THERE IS CONCERTED EFFORT UNDERWAY TO SETTLE SLOVENE MINORITY ISSUE WITH AUSTRIANS. ONLY CHRONIC PROBLEM AREA WHERE THERE HAD BEEN NO EVIDENT EFFORT WAS WITH BULGARIANS OVER MACEDONIA.

2. HOWEVER, ACCORDING CZECH CHARGE HERE THERE WILL SOON BE MOVEMENT IN THIS AREA AS WELL. HE REPORTS THAT DURING THEIR MEETING AT HELSINKI TITO AND ZHIVKOV AGREED TO TAKE CONCRETE STEPS TO PUT MACEDONIAN ISSUE BEHIND THEM. DISTINCTLY LOWER LEVEL OF POLEMICS IN PRESS OVER PAST FEW MONTHS IS FIRST PART OF AGREEMENT. TITO AND ZHIVKOV ALSO AGREED TO BRING SCHOLARS FROM TWO COUNTRIES TOGETHER TO CONDUCT JOINT STUDY OF HISTORICAL, CONFIDENTIAL

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CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC PROBLEMS AND TO RECOMMEND

MEASURES TO EASE TENSIONS. FINALLY, MLADENOV'S MEETING WITH MINIC HERE IN NOVEMBER WILL BE LARGELY DEVOTED TO DEFINING HOW TO PROCEED FURTHER DOWN THIS ROAD.

3. COMMENT: WHILE ONE CANNOT BE SNAGUINE ABOUT POSSIBILITIES FOR ACTUAL SOLUTION OF CENTURIES-OLD MACEDONIAN PROBLEM, THIS AND OTHER GROWING EFFORTS AT COOPERATION IN BALKANS COULD MAKE MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO STABILITY IN THIS AREA OF EUROPE.
SILBERMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SITUATION, BOUNDARY CLAIMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BELGRA05314
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750350-1064
From: BELGRADE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751067/aaaachru.tel
Line Count: 71
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 APR 2003 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <30 SEP 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE MACEDONIAN QUESTION
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, PBOR, PFOR, BU, YO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006